

HFA - 205



DEPARTMENT OF HEALTH & HUMAN SERVICES

Public Health Service

APR 27 1999

Food and Drug Administration  
Rockville MD 20857

1769 '99 APR 29 AM 100

Ms. Jane C. Powers  
111 Woodsway La.  
Morganton, NC 28655

Dear Ms. Powers:

This is in response to your letter dated April 9, 1999, addressed to Dr. Henney, regarding antibiotics used in livestock.

Thank you for sharing your concerns with us. The use of drugs in livestock and poultry is strictly regulated. Before any drug intended for use in animals is approved, it must undergo extensive chemical and toxicological testing which must demonstrate that the food from these animals is safe for human consumption. Withdrawal periods for drugs in edible tissues, which are based upon the depletion and elimination of the drug to a safe residue level in those tissues, ensures that the food we eat is safe. [n addition, milk discard times are established to ensure that any drug residues in milk are not harmful for human health. If an illegal drug residue is detected, FDA investigates the matter and takes regulatory action, if necessary. FDA believes that our residue monitoring program effectively protects the public from any potentially unsafe residue of animal drugs in meat and milk.

There has been a long-running controversy over the use of antibiotics in livestock feed. Enclosed is a chronology on the use of antibiotics in animal feeds. Please be assured that we take our responsibility to ensure the safety of the food supply very seriously. I am forwarding your letter to the Dockets Management Branch to be part of the record for Docket No. 99P-0485 -- "Rescind Approval of Subtherapeutic Antibiotic Use in Livestock."

Sincerely yours,

A handwritten signature in cursive script that reads "Karen A. Kandra".

Karen A. Kandra  
Consumer Safety Officer  
Center for Veterinary Medicine

Enclosure

99P-0485

C 110 1A3

111 Woodsway Lane  
Morganton, N.C. 28655  
powers jc.@mike.LRC.EDU  
April 9, 1999

1770 '99 APR 29 A9 55

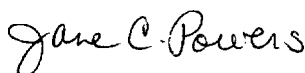
Dr. Jane Henney, M. D., Commissioner  
The U. S. Food and Drug Administration, Room 1471  
5600 Fisher Lane  
Rockville, MD 20857

Dear Dr. Henney:

As a senior nursing **student**, I have heard concern about the overuse of antibiotics expressed in the classroom and observed this problem in clinical. Antibiotic resistance is a serious **public health** problem that becomes increasingly **difficult** as the use of antibiotics grows. As I commute thirty minutes to school and clinical, I **listen** to quite a bit of National Public Radio. On *Science Friday*, one of the programs I listen to, a couple of weeks ago, I heard a discussion concerning antimicrobial agents being used in animal **feeds** and the implications for human health. After some research on Med Line, I understand that the inclusion of **subtherapeutic** doses of antimicrobial agents in the **feed** of **chickens**, cattle, pigs, turkeys, rabbits, goats, and some **fish** is credited for having contributed to lower costs of **meat**, eggs, and **milk**. These additives have, for many years, constituted the largest and most controversial category of antimicrobial use. Nearly half of the antimicrobial agents now sold in the United States are used either **therapeutically** or **subtherapeutically in animals**, and recent statutory changes involving animal drugs are expected to facilitate the therapeutic use of antibiotics **in animal feed** in the U. S. In the last two **decades**, concern has repeatedly been expressed by **public health** authorities, infectious disease specialists and **plasmid** biologists that this practice has contributed to the reservoir of **resistant** salmonella and to the occurrence of resistant **coliform** bacteria to which susceptible human **beings** are exposed.

As the problem of the overuse of antibiotics has the potential to affect antibiotic resistance in **animal** bacteria and the influence of such resistance on human health, I **feel** that a national program of surveillance of antimicrobial administration in both **subtherapeutic** and therapeutic doses in food producing **animals** should be established. Existing dose standards should be reduced and a time **frame** instituted to discontinue the usage of these antibiotics entirely **in** order to decrease further exposure of the general population to the widespread problem of resistance. Thank you.

Sincerely,



Jane C. Powers

cc U. S. Representative Cass Ballenger

99-2689

Jane C. Powers  
111 Woodsway Ln.  
Morganton, N.C. 28655



Dr. Jane Henney, M.D. Commissioner  
The U.S. Food & Drug Administration

Room 1471  
5600 Fisher Lane  
Rockville, MD 20857

16-70

